

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5-11 and 13-17 are currently active.

Claims 2-4 and 12 have been canceled.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings. Substitute drawings, which have been corrected, are being submitted to obviate this objection.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-3, 11 and 17 as being anticipated by Merli. The Examiner has indicated that Claims 4-10 and 12-16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1, as amended, is Claim 4 written as such, and Claim 11, as amended, is Claim 12, written as such. Furthermore, Claim 17 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 12 consistent with its nomenclature. Accordingly, it is submitted that applicant believes the above-identified patent application is now allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections and objections to this application be reconsidered and withdrawn, and Claims 1, 5-11 and 13-17, now in this application be allowed.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING
I hereby certify that the correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.
on 6/17/04
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Respectfully submitted,

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